



U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Hearing
Combatting Online Hate Speech and Disinformation
Targeting Religious Communities

Panel



David Kaye is a clinical professor of law at the University of California, Irvine. From 2014 – 2020 he served as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. He is also the author of *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet* (2019). His reporting for the UN addressed, among other things, [encryption and anonymity](#), the protection of [whistleblowers and journalistic sources](#), the regulation of [online content](#) by social media and search companies, [Artificial Intelligence technologies](#) and human rights, the [private surveillance industry](#), and [online hate](#). A member of several boards dealing with freedom of expression, online and offline, beginning in October 2020 he will serve as the Independent Chair of the Board of the Global Network Initiative. He has also written for international and American law journals and numerous media outlets. He began his legal career with the U.S. State Department’s Office of the Legal Adviser, is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and is a former member of the Executive Council of the American Society of International Law.



Susan Benesch is the Executive Director of the Dangerous Speech Project. She serves as the Faculty Associate of the [Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society](#) at Harvard University and teaches human rights at [American University’s School of International Service](#). Susan has taught human rights and refugee law at Georgetown and Princeton, among other universities, and has lectured at schools including Yale, Duke, Johns Hopkins, Virginia, and Humboldt University in Berlin. A human rights lawyer trained at Yale, she has also worked for the Center for Justice and Accountability, Amnesty International, and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (now Human Rights First). Her interest in speech dates back to her first career as a journalist. Before law school, she was chief staff

writer for the *Miami Herald* in Haiti. She also covered wars in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, and reported from many countries for the *New Republic*, *the Columbia Journalism Review*, and the Crimes of War website, among other publications.



Shakuntala Banaji is the Professor of Media, Culture and Social Change in the Department of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics, where she also serves as Program Director for the [MSc Media, Communication and Development](#). Her current research addresses the intersection between socio-political contexts, media, identities and participation. Her focus is twofold: first on the lives of children and young people in different geographical and class contexts, with a critical take on the ways in which rhetorical conceptions of citizenship, development, engagement and digital media construct the notion of agency, and position child and youth subjectivities. And second, on the ways in which historical propaganda and current misinformation, disinformation and hate speech

are reconfiguring the public spheres of India, the UK and other nations. She has also published on misinformation and fake news, creativity, democracy, the internet and civic participation.



Dr. Waris Husain is a human rights attorney specializing in digital rights, human rights defenders, and business and human rights. He is the former South Asia Policy Analyst for the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Dr. Husain is an adjunct professor of international law at the Howard University School of Law. He received his S.J.D. from the Washington College of Law at American University specializing in constitutional and comparative law, his L.L.M in international human rights and trade, and his J.D. from the Howard University School of Law.